

Classified Records Transfer Process Introduction

Narrator:

The classified records transfer process outlines the steps taken to transfer legal and physical custody of agency historic records that contain National Security Classified information or data to the National Archives so that they can be preserved and protected. Executive Order 13526 prescribes a uniform system for classifying, safeguarding, and declassifying national security information.

For agencies who store classified permanent records in the Federal Records Center Program additional time is needed to prepare these records for transfer. Sometimes it can be up to a three-year lead-up. The National Declass Center requires agencies to review their material for specific aspects of classified material. An example of which is the Kyle Lott review for RD and FRD materials.

The transfer process begins when National Security Classified records reach their disposition date and NARA notifies agencies that their records are eligible for accessioning into NARA's holdings. After notification, agencies should conduct a review of their eligible records to ensure that they are correctly scheduled. A Transfer Request is generated in ERA and NARA's form NA-14130, Classified Records Transfer Checklist, must be completed and attached to each transfer request as well as a box list. NARA will then review the request before approval.

Transferring classified records is a unique process and differs from transferring unclassified records. There are additional requirements that typically take more time, more agency expertise, and additional resources to accomplish.

A significant benefit to transferring classified records to NARA is that the records are secured and protected. The records are preserved and transferred on time as determined by a schedule. Once the classified records have been transferred from the Federal Records Centers to NARA, the agency is no longer responsible for paying storage. There also will be no potential for an erroneous disposal of the records once in NARA custody.

Unfortunately, there are consequences for not transferring classified records to NARA on time. These records are subject to the Federal Records Act. The National Archives approves agencies schedules that determine the legal timeline. Not transferring classified records could mean that historic records are not properly cared for or protected. As a result, these records could also be transferred at a lower classification level than the information is marked or transferred using an unapproved transfer method.

Through the appraisal and selection of historic permanent records the Archivist requires that classified permanent records be accessioned into the National Archives, when necessary, to comply with the provisions of the Federal Records Act of 1950. This act

provides the legal framework for federal records management, requires agencies to cooperate with the National Archives, and requires each federal agency to establish an ongoing program for records management including records creation, maintenance, and disposition.

NARA reviews each transfer request to ensure that the records are correctly scheduled and that a copy of the box list and NA-14130 is included.

Finally, agencies play a key role in helping NARA effectively accomplish its mission to preserve the historical records of the Federal government.

Through targeted planning and carefully coordination, agency records officers can ensure their agency's historic record is both protected and preserved. Understanding and implementing these additional tasks and stages in planning the classified records transfer process could not be accomplished without agencies' assistance and participation.